Restricted Circulation

This paper is not an official document; it is for information only and reference cannot be made to it in any printed publication without the permission of the author.

Agricultural Memorandum No 496

The worst climates for spring sowing in fields with poor drainage

L P Smith

Poor drainage (Class C in previous Ag Mems) is defined such that the following waiting days or 'delay-days' are needed after a wet spell before cultivations and field work can start in spring:-

Previous rain to be drained away	Delay-days
Little or none	2
Under 1 inch	3
1-2 inches	4
Over 2 inches	5.

The loss in yield (expressed as a percentage) due to late sowing, averaged over a 20-year (1949-68) period for 24 stations, depends on the length of the required work schedule.

The range of losses is as follows:-

	7 day Schedule	10 day Schedule	14 day Schedule
Least	2.3	4.3	8.1
Greatest	8.0	10.5	17.4%

These losses can be reduced either by improved drainage or by reducing the schedules.

Any comments or suggestions on this paper should be referred to the author.

Meteorological Office
Bracknell

August 1972